/1030 cont./

T84 T63 a definite instance which he might have observed, and Hyades (4):342, referring to alleged infanticide and the strangulation of individuals on the point of death, relies on statements of the missionaries and is careful to say that "personally we have not been able to verify these last two assertions" /translated from French/. As late as 1929, Spencer:88, leaned toward this view, without any kind of proof.

T63 A way out of this uncertainty is provided by an opinion for which I am indebted to the brothers, Martin and Fred Lawrence, with whom I had long discussions. They said that it is possible and most likely that some one, at the sight of a relative caught in the death struggle, lost control of himself after several hours. In his agitation, driven by his own pain at the imminent separation from the dying one and impotent in the face of the hopelessness of recovery, he may have seized his throat and strangled him so that instantly the death rattle and any movement stopped. This happened, however, only when the dying person was completely unconscious and there was absolutely no hope of recovery. The desire was simply to terminate his agony.

Only once did I come across the following remark, "taken from conversations with Mrs. Burleigh" /cited in English/ (MM: XXVIII,126;1894): "In some cases when the wife was near death the husband would put her into a canoe, take her miles away and leave her, hoping that exposure and starvation would hasten death" /cited in English/. Such behavior so obviously contradicts everything that has been definitely proved about the value of Yamana put on human life that any comment is superfluous. They have never been cannibals (p. 264 /untranslated/), nor does suicide occur among them, according to definite assertions by Dabbene (b):203 and Bridges (a):211.

181 The entire social order of our Foegians impresses one as kind and worthy of human beings, for it rests on natural marital relations and favorable mutual relations between parents and children, between the members of a kinship group, and among all the local groups. The small population and the lack of serious disturbances from without facilitate the cohesion of the people as a whole. This social order is conditioned by the nature of the economy of our Yamana. The charming picture of the harmoniously balanced

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clubs, flats, and so forth were used freely, with no holds barred, but grave wounds or deaths were uncommon. Organized warfare did not exist, and the *Yahgan* had no defensive weapons. The weapons used in their feuds were primarily made for, and adapted to, hunting.

Social relations within and between the dialectic and local groups appear to have been normally irenic, but violence and bloodshed were not infrequent. The friends of fighting parties usually intervened, both by persuasion and by force, to restore peace. A murder was strongly condemned, and the murderer often became an outcast. Bridges found 32 cases of homicide between 1871 and 1884—an annual rate per population something like 10 times as high as that of the United States. Mercy killings occurred for the purpose of putting an end to the sufferings of the hopelessly ill. Human sacrifice was unknown; so too was premeditated suicide.

The evidence that the *Yahgan* practiced no form of cannibalism—gastronomic, famine, ritual, or other—is convincing beyond all reasonable doubt. They would not even eat animals suspected of devouring human flesh.

MATERIAL LIFE

Ownership.—The *Yahgan* resented and avenged exploitative trespass upon their tribal territory or attempted occupation of any part thereof by non-*Yahgan*, Indian or White. So, too, did members of any one of the five dialectic groups (Gusinde, 1937, pp. 964-965) or, according to Koppers (1924 b, p. 178), of any one of the numerous local groups, by nonmembers. Since these local groups seemingly were chiefly kinship groups (*cf. supra*, Political Life), the *Yahgan* land-tenure system resembled the family-hunting-ground system. There was no exclusive tenure by kinship circles as such, by biological families, or by individuals.

Members of one dialectic or local group could, however, exploit the territory of other groups to secure food in grave shortage, to feast on a stranded whale, and to gather firestone and suitable canoe bark, which were found only in certain parts of the *Yahgan* territory. Ownership of personal property, such as weapons, clothing, adornments, and baskets, was vested in the individual. Women and children, as well as men, had well-recognized rights to such things. The ownership of certain other things—food, hut, canoe—appears to have been vested in the biological family.

Food was looked upon as the property and gift of the Supreme Being; wasting it was disrespectful to Him.

Title to personal property was acquired through occupation, labor, donation, and barter. Barter took two forms: plain, or exchange of goods for goods; and by exchange of presents. There was no cur-